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Mutat terra vices. — HOR.

PERHAPS that consequence of a long life, and variety of scenes, which strikes most deeply at the root of all our enjoyments, may be found, in the interruption of early and pleasing

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associations, the change of the best affections, and the destruction of the dearest feelings. Oh the commencement of life, vigorous with hope, & buoyant with exultation, the pleasures of friendly admonition, and parental guidance, because then enjoyed, we fancy are never to terminate; and look not forward to those eventful vicissitudes, whose unexpected intervention has blasted the brightest hopes, and reversed the finest anticipations.

Those whose age will suffer them to venture an opinion on the subject, will readily confess, how altered are their views, and how metamorphosed their conceptions, of life and its duties, its pleasures and its pains, since the day spring of their existence has past. And so manifest is the difference between all former and all present appearances, that fancy

even paints the hills of native pleasure, with a [illegible] coloring of its own: as if the wondrous transmutation of objects had not simply been confined to the partakers of our early diversions, but had extended to the scenes of Nature, the rocks and the vallies, the mountains and the streams.

It is very certain that our ideas of beauty of situation, & richness of prospect, are all modelled, by the tone of our feelings, and by ~~unattendant~~ attendant circumstances. The verdant landscape will afford but little charms to the mind oppressed with sensations contrary to those which the society of the ~~present~~ object world inspire. And on the same spot, where scenery has extated the tribute of our praise, when mirth

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and tidority were the impelling principles of the heart, we set our sentence of disatisfaction, when the comforts of which cheer and the companions which endiven are no longer present to our view.

In this way are to be traced explained those feelings, whose nature is easier felt than explained, which upon the visitation of the abodes of our childhood, or the theatres of our public actions, burst in upon the soul, with a weight of accumulated misery. It is then, that all that is dark in the present, and all that was animating in the past, rush together into the heart. The ravages of disease, the encroachments of death, the calamities of misfortune, all too often combine to throw a gloom over the places, where ~~all~~ every thing

was joyful, for nothing was deficient.

It is doubtless owing to this marvellous alteration in all worldly things, that the heart so often becomes hardened in the end either to the ~~feelings~~ sensations of sorrow or joy: and that men view with the same indifference what is pleasing or painful, melancholy or exhilarating, in nature or in art. The experience of a long succession of shifting conditions, has a natural tendency to weaken our confidence, and blunt our feelings. We tremble to rejoice at the sight of what we cannot be certain will continue: apathy seeming most convenient, takes possession of the

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faculties, blinds us to every thing that is beautiful, and to the gigantic steels us against every thing that is revolting to the heart.

If such be the unhappy tendencies of a life of various incident, it would certainly seem desirable, amid the convulsions that agitate, and the tumults that disturb the nations of the earth, to seek for that tranquil obscurity, where retirement might preclude the possibility of such unpleasant interruptions of our private happiness. In the eternal discard of worldly occupations, there is nothing to soothe, and every thing to disturb: and our personal calamities are only aggravated by the general contemplation of human afflictions. We have

not only our own, but the misfortunes of a suffering universe to sustain: for the sympathy tempts us to look a little beyond ourselves, to weep with the disconsolate, and sigh with the oppressed.

But it is to no purpose that we speak of the advantages of a condition, which it is not in our power to adopt, or to reject. The whole constitution of man, the nature of society, and the necessity of subsistence, indispensably require, not a continuance of seclusion, but an intercourse with men: so that the changes which we would avoid, we are compelled to endure, tho' purchased with all that is dearest to the heart, and all that is engaging in life.

In the early periods of our existence, it is most natural

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to cling with ardor to the land of our birth, and the home of our fathers. At that infant season, we are all ready to dispute the matchless beauties of the scenes we inhabit, to participate their charms, and triumph in their pleasures. And yet, strange as it may seem, even this fire of enthusiasm is quenched by commingling with a diversity of men, and the visitation of distant lands. Not only is the thread of our associations broken, and the warmth of our affections cooled, by the relinquishment of our native halls, but such a novel appearance presents itself to us, in the endless varieties of character, place, scenery, and situation,

that we lose those sacred attachments, which once link-ed our feelings with an indissoluble tie to the seat of our earliest amusements. After a long absence from natal abodes & separation from the friends of youth, & men have returned with disappointment, and immediately quitted again the shelter of the ancestral roof, for some more enlivening scene of action. The enchantments of peaceful enjoyment, secluded pleasures, and unranging ease, lose every charm they once possessed, when the mind has been dissipated by acquaintance with an extensive number of men and things.

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As this is the inevitable result of too unlimited an indulgence in things foreign to our first impressions, the lessons of caution and vigilance cannot be too earnestly enjoined. Among the vast number of our youth, who commence their career by travel thro' foreign lands, it is to be feared very few carry with them the proper spirit of prudence and reason. In visiting the abodes of present greatness, or the ruins of fallen glory, we not merely gratify a laudable curiosity, but imbibe the exalted precepts of morality and wisdom. But he who so far forgets, the ties which bind him to his na-

tive shores, the duties he owes, the friends he has left, and the occupations he has undertaken, as to run giddy with the love of novelty, and neglect the remembrance of his real state, had acquired greater benefit to himself, and offered less injustice to his country, if he had remained buried in the obscurity of native retirement. The groves where we wandered in infancy; the roof that protected us in the heat, and sheltered us in the storm; the abodes of our forefathers, and the fields of their labors; these are the scenes whose colors the ravages of time can never efface from the heart.

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whose memory will cheer us
in the beating of the tempest,
support us in
and the raging of the winds: to
lights ^to glide our path,
^ in ruin and defeat, havoc,
devastation, and death.

Q.